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Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (FRASER, DONALD M.)
SUBJECT: CODEL FRASER: SALZBERG

SUMMARY: AFTER DEPARTURE CONGRESSMAN FRASER, EMBASSY ARRANGED SEPARATE SCHEDULE FOR STAFFER SALZBERG AT HIS REQUEST LARGELY WITH OPPOSITIONISTS. HE MAINTAINED PREOCCUPATION OF CONGRESSMAN FRASER, FOCUSING ON TORTURE, CORRUPTION, U.S. IMAGE AND MILITARY ROLE HERE. EMBASSY SOUGHT TO WIDEN PERSPECTIVE OF STAFFER WHO UNFAMILIAR WITH AREA AND SUGGESTED THAT SHOULD CONGRESS HOLD HEARINGS IT ATTEMPT GET BROAD SPECTRUM OF EXPERTS. SALZBERG DEPARTED STATING HE WOULD NOT RECOMMEND MILITARY CUT BUT WOULD FAVOR SENCE OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION CRITICIZING PHILIPPINE HUMAN RIGHTS.

1. FOLLOWING DEPARTURE CONGRESSMAN FRASER, EMBASSY ARRANGED SEPARATE SCHEDULE FOR HOUSE STAFFER SALZBERG. APPOINTMENTS INCLUDED BERNIE WIDEMAN, FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW; FATHER JALANDONI (WHOM HE CALLED MOST IMPRESSIVE PERSON HE HAD MET); DR. MARY HOLLNSTEINER, ATENEO; S.P. LOPEZ, REVISITS WITH SENATORS DIOKNO, FATHER ORTIZ, AND TANADA, AND MRS. LOPEZ AND BRIEFINGS BY AID ON LAND REFORM AND BY JUSMAG.

2. SALZBERG CONTINUED PATTERN OF QUESTIONS SET BY CONGRESSMAN. HE INQUIRED ABOUT STATE OF ECONOMY, EXTENT OF CORRUPT-
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TION AND TORTURE, ROLE OF CHURCH, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, IMAGE

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OF U.S. AND U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT TO PHILIPPINES. PACE OF VISITING BEGAN TO TELL ON SALZBERG AND THOROUGHNESS OF QUESTIONING DECLINED ALMOST IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO ENTHUSIASM OF INTERVIEWEES TO DESCRIBE THEIR PLIGHT TO HIM. SALZBERG ASKED TO SEE FR. DE LA TORRE (DIOKNO INVITED DE LA TORRE'S MOTHER TO HIS HOUSE) WHICH EMBASSY DECLINED TO RAISE WITH GOP SINCE REQUEST NOT MADE BY CONGRESSMAN AND PRESENTED AT TIME GOP PREOCCUPIED WITH ARRIVAL ROMANIAN HEAD OF STATE. SALZBERG ALSO ASKED SEE EX-PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL WHO SUBSEQUENTLY CANCELLED APPARENTLY ON ADVICE GOP.

3. EMBASSY ATTEMPTED TO PUT SALZBERG CONCERNS IN PERSPECTIVE OF REALITIES OF PHILIPPINES. DURING WRAP UP SESSION WE TOUCHED ON RELATIVENESS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO ASIAN CULTURE, LEADING AND RESPONSIBLE ROLE OF CHURCH IN THIS FIELD, AND LIEKLY IMPACT OF ATTEMPT TO CUT OR CANCEL MILITARY ASSISTANCE. EMPHASIZED RELATIONSHIP OF MAP TO BASES, ITS SMALL SIZE, ITS OVERBURDENING WITH VARIOUS CAVEATS, AND NEED TO FIND MORE DEPENDABLE ALTERNATIVE SUCH AS RENT. SALZBERG GENERALLY NOT INFORMED ON QUESTION OF BASES AND CONCLUDED AFTER JUSMAG BRIEFING THAT SMALL PROGRAM WOULD NOT BE MISSED BY PHILIPPINES. SINCE SALZBERG HAS NO EXPERIENCE IN AREA, AND FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON HUMAN RIGHTS, EFFORT TO PRESENT BROAD PICTURE WAS UPHILL STRUGGLE. AS PARTING THOUGHT TO SALZBERG, EMBASSY SUGGESTED THAT IF CONGRESS WERE TO HOLD HEARINGS ON PHILIPPINES THAT IT INVITE AS BROAD SPECTRUM OF EXPERTS AS POSSIBLE SO CONGRESS WOULD GET VARIOUS SIDES OF VERY COMPLEX PICTURE.

4. SALZBERG LEFT SAYING THAT HE THOUGHT CONGRESSMAN NOT LEANING IN FAVOR MILITARY CUT AND HE (SALZBERG) WOULD NOT RECOMMEND IT. HE WOULD ADVOCATE A SENSE OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION CRITISIZING SOME UNSPECIFIED HJMAN REIGHTS SHORTCOMINGS OF PHILIPPINES. HE ALSO INDICATED THROUGHOUT VISIT BELIEF THAT EMBASSY NOT "AGGRESSIVE" ENOUGH WITH GOP ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, POSSIBLY IMPLYING ATTEMPT TO DIRECT EMBASSY IN THIS RESPECT.
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